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"Thomme stowue he tauzte · to take two stauēs,
And fecche felice home · fro þe wyuen pyne."

Professor Skeat finds it "a difficult passage" because of the "two stauēs." He says: "I suppose the sentence to mean that *Tom Stowe*, who had neglected his wife and let her get into bad ways, or who had allowed her to be punished as a scold, had much better fetch her home than leave her exposed to public derision. Such an errand would require a strong arm, and two staves would be very useful in dispersing the crowd. I do not think it is meant that he is to beat *her*, for then *one* would have sufficed; nor would Reason give such bad advice."

Assuming Professor Skeat to have the correct line of argument, would he not have explained the passage entirely, if he had gone a step further and supposed that Felice was quite as anxious to be brought home as Tom was to bring her? For not even a scold would like the vexation and notoriety of the cucking-stool, when there was any possible means of avoiding it. In such a mood Felice, who was probably one of the laboring class and consequently possessed of some muscle, would be no contemptible ally for Tom in working out her own salvation; and the pair, each armed with a stave, would beat a much more effectual retreat through the jeering, interfering crowd than would be possible, if we assume that Tom had to conduct an obdurate wife with one hand and dispel a meddlesome crowd with the other. Indeed, he would surely know that such an undertaking would be foredoomed to failure. We can only suppose, then, that Tom, familiar with his wife's disposition, knew he could rely on her to aid in her rescue; accordingly he went armed with *two* staves. This, however, is a mere suggestion.

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BRIEF MENTION.

INTERNATIONAL ROMANCE DIALECT SOCIETY.

We have just received the prospectus of a *Société internationale de dialectologie romane*, whose headquarters are at Brussels and whose object is the study of the various Romance idioms, particularly the patois. The entire Romance territory is divided into twelve districts to each of which a specialist has been assigned in order to collect, revise, or edit material for publication. This material, according to its nature, will appear in one of three publications adapted to the particular kind of contribution: a *Revue*, a *Bulletin*, and a *Bibliothèque de dialectologie romane*. Besides the twelve districts comprising the territory where Romance idioms are those principally spoken, there are five divisions comprising non-Romance nations, but among which there is more or less activity in Romance subjects, according as any one particular phase presents itself for consideration. One of these five divisions is the United States. If it be recalled that out of a population of 76,303,387, 10,356,644, or 13.6% are foreigners, the reason for including this country as possibly worthy of study becomes apparent. There are certain areas whose linguistic features have already received some slight attention, Canadian-French, for instance, that of Louisiana, and the Portuguese of New Bedford. There may also be found settlements of Italians and Spaniards in our country whose ethnological and linguistic conditions may prove of much interest for this International Society. Further information will be gladly sent to those sufficiently interested in the object of the society to care to correspond with or furnish data for publication to the United States editor: J. Geddes, Jr., Boston University.